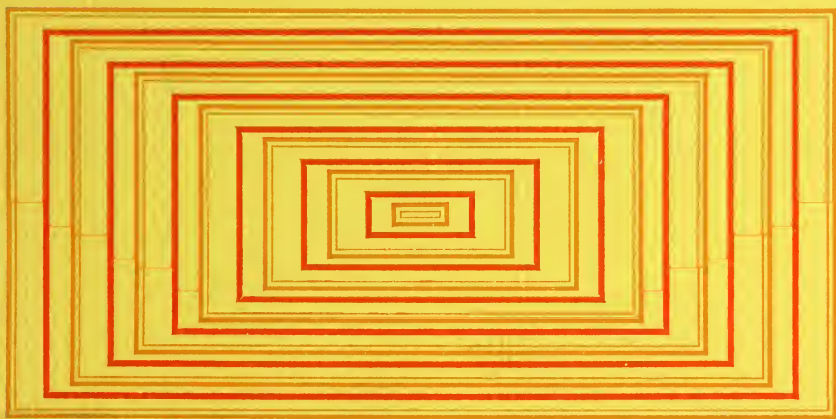
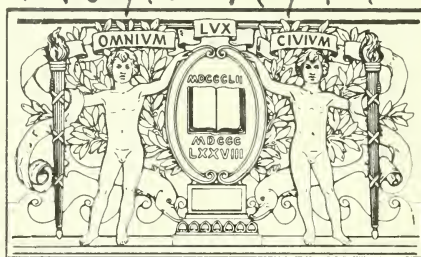


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AUDIENCE FOR ART

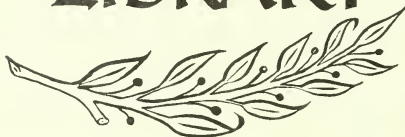


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THE AMERICAN
AUDIENCE FOR ART

*Symposia held in the Wiggin Gallery,
Boston Public Library, on May 1, 1970,
and May 2, 1969*

The American Audience for Art

Being essays by Charles D. Childs, Mario Micossi,
and John Arthur, and a dialogue between
Samuel Grafton, Robert Hallock,
Sinclair Hitchings, and John Wilson

BOSTON 1972

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The two symposia exploring *The American Audience for Art*, and the publication of this book, have been made possible through the support and encouragement of the Albert H. and Jessie D. Wiggin Foundation.

Previous books of essays in this series:

Art & Education

Education in the Graphic Arts

Print Collecting Today

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Library of Congress Card Number 75-188000

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Foreword

SINCE 1966, the Boston Public Library has held a symposium each May, in the setting of the Library's Wiggin Gallery, to explore aspects of art and education. The present book is the fourth to publish the personal experiences, ideas, and opinions brought forward at these gatherings of collectors, artists, teachers, librarians, and curators.

Symposia held in 1969 and 1970 to look at the character and extent of the American audience for art are published in this volume. The 1970 symposium, held in the Wiggin Gallery on May 1 of that year, is printed first. Papers were presented by Charles D. Childs, founder of the Childs Gallery, Boston; Mario Micossi, who is best known in the United States for his white-on-black scratch drawings reproduced in *The New Yorker* and other magazines; and John Arthur, director of the Quincy Art Club, Quincy, Illinois. For the symposium, the Library mounted an exhibition of prints, drawings, and watercolors by Micossi in the Wiggin Gallery.

The 1969 symposium was planned as a four-part dialogue. Participants were Samuel Grafton and Robert Hallock, editors of *Lithopinion*, John Wilson, proprietor of The Lakeside Studio, Lakeside, Michigan, and Sinclair Hitchings, Keeper of Prints at the Boston Public Library, whose job was to act as moderator and questioner. We asked Messrs. Grafton, Hallock, and Wil-

son to provide introductory statements; discussion followed. The result was highly successful in its spoken form, and we now present the transcript, with minor revisions and changes by the speakers. We have shifted the original order of the introductory statements and condensed the questions and commentary which were directed at the speakers. The text demonstrates the strengths and weaknesses of transcripts of the spoken word. We feel that its spark and spontaneity constitute full justification for the informal prose.

The 1969 symposium was also planned in recognition of an extraordinary venture in magazine publishing. In the center cases of the Wiggin Gallery an exhibition, *A Salute to Lithopinion*, brought pages of the magazine together with original drawings and watercolors commissioned for various issues. Founded in 1965 as the graphic arts and public affairs journal of Local One, Amalgamated Lithographers of America, *Lithopinion* continues to receive recognition for its inventiveness and high standards of design and presentation.

In the wall cases of the Wiggin Gallery was mounted a second exhibition, *Masterworks of Lithography from the Albert H. Wiggin Collection*. Prints by Gericault, Daumier, Rops, Fantin-Latour, Redon, Toulouse-Lautrec, Shannon, and Bellows were shown.

Of the seven contributors to this book, Mr. Arthur is now director of the Boston University Art Gallery; Mr. Grafton is the head of his own publishing company. The others are still at their places of 1969 and 1970. We are pleased to present the views of seven people with varied and pertinent experience. We asked them, incidentally, to speak from their own experience and observation and to be autobiographical in their scrutiny of the American audience for art.

PHILIP J. MCNIFF
Director, Boston Public Library

CHARLES D. CHILDS

A New Scale
of Taste and Judgment

TODAY our vanishing American is one who knows nothing about art! Most of us now know about or collect something. Between Arlington and Gloucester Streets on Newbury Street in Boston there are more than thirty art galleries offering prints, drawings, sculptures, and paintings by artists up and down the spectrum from Wyeth to Currier & Ives, with an in-between mixture of Audubon's *Birds of America*, Calder's mobiles, Homer's watercolors, and Picasso's etchings.

In Samuel Sewall's diary describing Boston in the late seventeenth century, only one picture is mentioned, a view of Oxford (probably an engraving). Today this city, like others across the country, is alive with art of all kinds from the smallest drawing to the outdoor mural covering the side of a building you've probably seen in Boston's *Summerthing*. We are still the restless Americans looking for the new, the best, and always the most novel and exciting. So I begin by asking:

What is the American audience for art today? That it is large and growing larger, and open to new and exciting ideas, is made evident by the demands it places upon our museums, our school systems, and our news media of all sorts. With this growth is a developing dichotomy of tastes and interests induced by what we may call the "American school of art, old

and new"; the old school is devoted to representational presentation of our life and environment as established by tradition, and is accompanied by the new movement, which was born in this country as a successor to the French School in which Picasso is preeminent. The new movement is assertive, abstract, and explosive; the old is relatively tranquil, and traditional. Together, these movements have coalesced as a force which is shaping the world of American art by establishing new types of museums, new categories for art collectors, and new images for the American people to accept. Our burgeoning museum world has been obliged to outgrow the traditional European mold, to accommodate the new look imposed upon it by this changing world.

Who constitutes the American audience for art? Consider the collectors. I am astonished by the catholicity of taste indicated by the American people, and the directions their choices may take; how divergent they may be from the guidelines laid out by museum standards, and how they have changed narrow and selective definitions into new connotations within the all-embracing label, ART.

Fifty years ago, what art museum, whose director's sanity was assured, would have sought after a Garbisch Collection of American Primitive Paintings; a Karolik Collection of American landscapes and narrative paintings; a Peters Collection of Currier & Ives prints; and a Gilcrease Collection of art relating to the American Indian? And on the heels of the Armory Show of advanced paintings in New York in 1913, how many museums were prepared to seek prototypes for the art of Jackson Pollock, Andy Warhol, or Sandy Calder? Yet the art history of this country is illuminated by examples set by foresighted collectors, motivated by their personal convictions. By these venturesome folk were formed some of the major collections now deposited in our art museums.

This type is not unique. All across this country, new collections and new museums are growing and serving the public by being true to the format established by their progenitors. Through them our present audience is taking a broader view of our cultural heritage, and including with our great museum treasures that part of our visual store that is still available to hold and preserve. It is my belief that the American audience for art has established a scale of taste and judgment that is new and national in stature, broad in concept but determined to test, question, or accept both old and new visual images consonant with its time. Its tastes are expanding and encompass the most abstract and "way out" forms and the most conservative and representational manifestations of the past. It is no longer rigid or restrictive in its boundaries for creative and experimental efforts. It is indeed reaching a point where new categories may be required to define new areas, and to intelligently discuss or understand their value. But the audience for art today is as much a part of the American scene as the sports audience; its attendance in museums, galleries, libraries, and other exhibiting institutions is equally large, or larger, and it includes all ages and classes of people.

What part does the art museum hold in this great mass movement? How much has it inspired or shared its momentum? Where does it stand now, with it or aside from it? First, we should realize how many varieties of museums there are in the United States today, and how various their activities and needs are, and then treat particular museums that have dealt successfully and wisely with the public they serve. In *America's Museums—The Belmont Report*, prepared for the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities by a special committee of the American Association of Museums in October 1968, it is stated that there are now more than six thousand museums in the United States, that they exist in "all sizes and shapes and

conditions,” and that “they engage in an extraordinary variety of activities.” To quote attendance figures, an American Association of Museums survey in 1962 “found that of 1,964 museums responding to an inquiry, 638 (32.4 per cent) reported annual attendance in excess of 35,000 visits.” Some of these certainly were college and university museums and the same report states “more than 400 colleges and universities have campus museums . . . the majority . . . are in the disciplines of art and science.” In its section entitled “The Demands on Museums,” the Belmont Report states that in 1962 the United States total of museum attendance had reached 200 million visits a year, and in 1969, total attendance was believed to exceed 300 million a year.

This soaring attendance rate is nationwide, and the Belmont Report finds a reason in its section devoted to “The Museum Tradition in America”: “The extraordinary public response to what museums offer suggests that the public feels strongly about these institutions. They offer alluring ways to learn about man and his world, the better to understand who we are, where we are, how we got this way, where we are going. For uncounted thousands of individuals museums make possible—often for the first time—the enjoyment of learning. Museums, the daily attendance suggests, offer an opportunity to enjoy a work of art—or sometimes to denounce it, which is another form of enjoyment.” That the art museum should be devoted to public service in the United States has been accepted since the opening of the art exhibitions to the public at the Boston Athenaeum in 1827, which policy has continued through its successor, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The two-volume *Centennial History of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, by Walter Muir Whitehill, profusely illustrated and comprehensive in chronological history, makes clear the founding, growth and proliferation of collections, services, and personnel that accompany progressive

steps of a great museum. It also helps the reader to find that a museum grows, or falters in stride, by the quality of judgment and wisdom exercised by its trustees and directors at moments of hard decision.

Alike in age, in growth, and in accumulation of art treasures, the Boston Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of New York stand as venerable and mighty institutions honored at home and abroad. Yet strong and prestigious though they are, the very weight and mass of their great collections are prone to become too cumbersome and static to serve the major purpose their possession implies. Sinclair Hitchings, in his article "A Citadel of Art" published in *Boston Arts Magazine* in April 1970, comes close to the heart of this problem. Here he states in part, "Another way of looking at the Museum is in terms of the sheer quantity of art it owns. One fact about our great art museums, including the Boston Museum, that everyone has come to know about is this: the art inside them is piling up very fast." To find room for this now swollen flood of art is only one part of the problem; the other, and more important, is how to use it, display it, and present it wisely to the many-faceted American audience for art. This is the *bête noire* of directors and curators throughout the museum world, where the growing pains of their collections are not easily assuaged by equal growth of the house that holds them. To face and meet this growing challenge is testing the caliber and abilities of museum personnel across the country. If it is to be met and dealt with so that the museums can cope with their new problems, some inner searching, some rejuvenation, and readjustment of fixed attitudes of the governing bodies must be made.

Youth and enthusiasm, mixed with experience and wisdom, can create a brew that should enliven the curatorial staff of many museums today. Unless young and promising scholars have hope of secure places in the museum hierarchy, and en-

couragement for use of their talents, a salutary relationship between museum and community may not be achieved.

How helpful it would be if benefactors might see how vital a part their contributions to the museum's future welfare could become, if they applied them directly to general purpose rather than purchase funds. The pressing need is there. A great curator is more important than one masterpiece; a great conservator-restorer provides more by the preservation of great works of art sometimes than the money that acquired them. Devoted assistant curators and volunteer workers in harmony with the director and curators can become the vital element that shapes and enriches the whole museum fabric. Only when the many talents involved here are given free expression in warm, co-operative association can a museum be brought to its maximum potential. Only when (in our time of great affluence) the museum personnel may receive a fair and just return in salary terms for their contribution to the public good, will that personnel be drawn from the most promising men available to the museum world.

That this is not an impossible dream has been demonstrated by several museums in our own New England area. Two of these, different in nature but alike in their concepts of public service, will serve as examples. One is old, the first museum of its type in this country, and a collecting institution. The other is young, collecting as yet only a by-product, but an active exhibiting institution, a central core for manifold services covering a wide area. The first is the Peabody Museum of Salem, Massachusetts, and the second, the De Cordova Museum of Lincoln, Massachusetts. Both have participated as integral components in the communities they serve and have become widely known far afield.

The Peabody Museum of Salem is the oldest continuously operated museum in the United States. Founded as the Salem

East India Marine Society in 1799, it housed a collection of natural and artificial curiosities gathered from many parts of the world visited by Salem mariners. As it grew and changed its nature and its name, it continued to acquire objects so various and curious that a simple definition could no longer be appropriate. Over the years the nature and quality of the collections have changed from a potpourri of curiosities into a mine of major artifacts so all-embracing in character that the museum's possessions are now listed in three main classes: Maritime History, Ethnology, and the Natural History of Essex County. All of these collections are now housed in a central and original building, East India Marine Hall, built in 1824, and the additions to it which now contain a new library, an enlarged lecture and exhibition hall, and rooms devoted to special exhibits.

The Ethnology Department contains nearly forty-six thousand artifacts that display the creative endeavors principally of the Pacific regions known as Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia, a vast area blanketing much of the South Seas. In addition to these are many objects representing household arts and crafts of Japan, said to be the finest in the world, brought to Salem by Edward S. Morse and Dr. Charles Goddard Weld, both well known for their further contributions to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Individually catalogued items in the Maritime History Department, some of which are paintings, drawings, or prints, number nearly fourteen thousand; and in ship portraiture, port views, historical pictorial material relating to the sea, Peabody holds a major place among maritime museums in the world.

This matter-of-fact nutshell description of the collections would be pointless without considering the predominant factor that governs the museum's life. It is the philosophy of its director, its trustees, and its able and enthusiastic staff, and their coordination, that can stand as a model for any museum today.

Working together in spirit and ability has become so obviously desirable that very able volunteer workers have been drawn to the museum by the very personal rewards this spirit promotes. From the top to the bottom echelon, the desire to have this institution represent the best that can be offered in public service is evident. Remember that this is, in a sense, a suburban museum serving in the near shadow of its great neighbor, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, yet visitors have come from all the fifty states and more than twenty foreign countries, an enviable record for a small suburban museum! This year nearly five hundred groups of young people, students, clubs, and other associations, will visit the museum; the use of the library has tripled in the last ten years—yet all the facilities of the institution are in the hands of the regular staff of nineteen (expanded from four on the 1931 payroll), including secretarial help, constables, and building maintenance men, buttressed very competently by an alert and lively corps of volunteer workers. To quote from an editorial in the January 1970 issue of the museum's quarterly journal, *The American Neptune*: "The Museum believes it should perform a tripartite function—to provide the most meaningful and lucid exhibitions possible, to continue effectively as a prime research institution within its spheres of influence, and to administer educational programs related to its three fields of endeavor." This is the Peabody Museum.

The De Cordova Museum is relatively a newcomer, crowding twenty-five-odd years of existence, serving under one director during this time and greeting the tumultuous phases of contemporary art with welcoming arms and a collaborating spirit, occasionally thumbing its nose courteously at some of its more hidebound fraternity—and all this without prejudice or bias. Like Peabody it is a suburban small-town museum, seemingly overwhelmed by the weight and stature of its near neighbor, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; it casually shrugs

its shoulders and goes about its own affairs, undiminished in proportion and building steadily towards a stature that it has obviously earned.

Happily situated in parklike surroundings bordering a lake, and housed in a modernized mansion (lived in originally by Julian De Cordova, whose bequest to the town established the museum) and recently constructed outbuildings with studiolike classrooms for studies in a variety of the fine and practical arts, De Cordova has created a place all its own among New England museums. It shares with Peabody a desire to offer the public the best that a museum can within the field of the arts that it covers.

De Cordova swings into the exhibition season with an exhilarating display of current fare that runs from a bold, provocative presentation of the best of the past, to samples of contemporary Humanism. As a living part of the contemporary scene, De Cordova openly encourages today's artists to "make it as they see it." Trends and styles as they reflect present movements are welcome, and the artists of this region recognize this museum as a home base to which they are drawn, by a comparability shared with few museums. Fortunately, both director and staff hold a broad view of ART in the round. Yesterday's contribution to the visual arts is not a dead issue, and what excited the eye and stirred the mind before deserves to be seen again now. In this, I believe De Cordova presents a better balanced view of the creative arts than any museum active in the New England area.

The museum's influence has spread abroad to the peripheral areas extending from the center in Lincoln to towns and cities far afield, all finding De Cordova a center which provides lively and needed stimulation in the arts. In 1968, one hundred three towns and cities in Massachusetts were represented by citizens as paying members of the De Cordova Museum, and as

of today, approximately thirty-five hundred members—of these towns, out-of-state, and abroad as well—are sharing participants of the De Cordova programs. This number, compared with the near fourteen thousand members of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, should indeed speak well for the relative newcomer in Lincoln.

Here, then, are two museums, inadequately described to do them full credit, but perhaps enough to encourage you to come to know them better. Here, I can do no better than quote a comment made in an open letter to the *Salem Gazette*, one hundred sixty-five years ago, referring to the museum which is now the Peabody: "Many men of sordid and contracted minds consider a museum as they do fireworks, that give pleasure only when seen; but it appears different to those who are enlightened by science and refined by taste; they are filled with admiration at every thing which throws light on the history of nations, or exhibits the beauties, or displays the wonders of nature."

May our attitude today, as an audience for the arts, agree with that of this anonymous writer and give similar credit to our museums.

MARIO MICOSSÌ

Magazines, Galleries, Museums, and Collectors

WHEN I was twenty-five, I took the sharp decision to start working as an artist and became an affectionate aficionado of the museums, mainly in Rome. At this time I was working for an airline and I saw American magazines. In 1955 I sent over a bunch of small drawings, *graffiti*, to the *New Yorker*, third-class mail, and had a check after three months. I used the money from that first check to make my first trip to America. I came to New York and stayed three months. Later I sold other drawings to the *New Yorker* and other magazines, and I began to come to the United States once every year.

I started making prints in 1962. The main reason was that making the *graffiti* was very close to etching. As a matter of fact, I coat my plates with heavy varnish so that drawing through it gives me that same sensuous feeling I have in drawing through the dried coat of ink in making *graffiti*.

What I was doing for the magazines was not enough. I felt I could do more. And as long as the landscape and particularly the Italian landscape had always attracted me enormously, I thought I could do something about it. I decided to cross the Rubicon and go into the graphic arts.

In 1964 I had my first show at Weyhe Gallery in New York, and this gave me confirmation of the interest that was aroused

in people. And this, and the need for adventure, and curiosity, made me start going around American cities. I really like to encounter people. It's good or bad as it comes out. It fills my need for adventure and romance.

Through the Weyhe Gallery, the Brooklyn Museum and the New York Public Library started buying from me, so when I saw that local institutions were buying from me, when I went around the United States, I started contacting graphics galleries and showing my work. In Boston, the Fogg Museum and the Boston Public Library bought my prints. In Chicago, the Kovler Gallery bought some things, and Dr. Joachim came over to the gallery, I think.

My first trip to California was 1957. About '63, '64, '65, I first took prints. The bookstore of the Los Angeles Museum took some of my prints, and the U.C.L.A. collection bought some prints, and the Achenbach in San Francisco.

I met London Arts through the Kovler Gallery about 1966. First they bought a certain amount, then they began buying complete editions. They really go around the country, these people.

My first exhibition was at Weyhe in '64, then Kovler in '65, then Wakefield, the bookstore where I still show in New York, in '66, '67, '68.

I think I should mention that my drawings appear almost weekly in the *New Yorker*, and *The Saturday Review* and *The Atlantic Monthly* use them. People write, they say they would like a particular drawing, or they write and ask for a selection of drawings. I like very much to do these little black-and-white drawings; it is a joy to do them, because the rapid execution can follow at once the glimpses of imagination.

In Italy I don't force the market at all. My first show will be in November in Italy. I'm starting my career now in Italy. In Germany I'm more known through the *Kunstkabinett* in

Frankfurt, Conzen in Düsseldorf, and Boisserées in Cologne. In Italy the gallery owners are like opera singers.

While in Italy, nice petit-bourgeois tend to buy art—sometimes for snobbish reasons—in Germany collectors are usually on a higher level and difficult to please. Often pedantic. Americans tend to react more emotionally, regardless of an established name, which is a good thing. It is interesting to see how the younger generation moves into collecting.

The market in the United States is broader because of the participation of young people. The six- and seven-year-olds who were sitting on the floors of museums in the classes ten years ago now have some money, and they are interested. Printsellers really push art into the universities. They say, these are our future customers. And they say, there are so many millions of university students and in ten years the number will be doubled.

Finally, if I have to talk about my ideal in art in general I want to say that *I am not scared at all* by beauty, provided that fundamental values of form and abstraction are respected, as they are in the great masters of the Renaissance, Florentines and Venetians whom I greatly admire.

JOHN ARTHUR

When Museums Behave Less Like Institutions

FIRST let me admit that the organization I represent is not a museum, but a small community art center in a town trying desperately to reach a population of 50,000.

Before this year, the Quincy Art Club, which was founded in 1923, was run by its founder and life president, Mrs. Elizabeth M. Sinnock, (she is eighty-four this year), and the executive board. There was really no education program to speak of and the gallery relied almost entirely on canned shows and area artists for its exhibitions.

This year, in order to expand its program, the Quincy Art Club was given a five-year grant by the Quincy Foundation. The purpose of the grant was to enable the art club to originate travelling exhibits by significant contemporary artists, expand its educational facilities, offer special workshops in the crafts, and bring in prominent artists and writers for lectures and extended visits. I was hired as its first full-time director. Being a producing artist, I am somewhat of a dilettante as a gallery director, but I can also give a different slant to the methods of operation.

First of all, I think every art center, gallery, and museum should do as much as possible to subsidize living artists, and still present a balanced program. This does not mean that the museum should be pressed into following and exhibiting floor

art, earth art, and all the fashionable trends. Instead, the museum or art center should develop programs and operate them as imaginatively and creatively as possible.

The grant from the Quincy Foundation allowed a comfortable budget for exhibits and lectures. Of greater import is the flexibility allowed in the use of the money.

In arranging the major exhibits and lectures I keep two factors in mind: the cost per person attending and the chances for financial returns.

If the cost per person is more than one dollar, the project is usually scrapped and only a comprehending and appreciative audience is considered valid. This eliminates a concentration of school children filing through like noisy cattle, and similar statistical trickery.

If an art center is greatly concerned with a large attendance record I would recommend a heavy and steady diet of children's art (preferably local), area artists (particularly the diletantes), and pornography. For example, I cannot imagine large crowds in America for an exhibit of Morandi etchings.

The audience for the arts is approximately five percent of the population. In Quincy, this would be a maximum of five thousand persons. Obviously, with an expensive exhibit that base figure must be broadened; the most effective way to increase the audience is to work in conjunction with several institutions or to circulate the exhibits.

This leads to the second factor: the opportunity to recover on heavy investments. Here, the most important aspect is the ability to spend heavily on the initial investment, for the chances of recovery are increased in direct proportion to the amount invested.

I will give you three examples of the projects we have initiated this year, and a fourth proposed project.

Hopefully, many of you saw the exhibition of drawings by

Daniel Lang here at the Boston Public Library. He is one of the finest draughtsmen and probably the greatest composer in American art today. But most important, his paintings are penetrating and often disturbing comments on the human situation. Although he has made incredible use of the interior and still life, the landscape is his favorite theme.

The art club brought Daniel to Quincy as Artist-in-Residence for two months last summer for the purpose of producing a large exhibit of Illinois landscapes. In that period he produced ten paintings (ranging in size from 3 by 3 feet to 4 by 6 feet) and fifteen drawings.

We paid Daniel a very modest fee and furnished him with a studio and apartment. In return, the art club received its choice of one painting and two drawings from the work produced and the right to circulate the exhibit for a year. Circulation of the exhibit was a major enticement to the artist.

In addition to the expenses mentioned, we had the cost of framing and crating, and printing a catalogue.

The total investment in the exhibit was around thirty-five hundred dollars. Approximately sixteen hundred dollars will be recovered in rental fees, two hundred dollars will be regained from the sale of the catalogues, and the current market value of the paintings and drawings chosen for our permanent collection is eleven hundred dollars.

At this point, five paintings and eight drawings have been sold from the exhibit with no commission. The exhibit has been booked by universities, art centers, and museums throughout the Midwest. It is expected that the total attendance will be at least eight thousand by the end of circulation.

The second project, a subscription exhibit, offers unlimited possibilities; due to the success of our first venture, the Illinois Arts Council plans to initiate a similar program. For our first attempt in this area, we chose two portfolios of large, colorful

silkscreened prints: Krushenick's *Iron Butterfly* and Paolozzi's *Universal Electronic Vacuum*. Each portfolio contained ten prints and both were purchased at a dealer's price. Aluminum frames were used for all the prints. The exhibit was made available to subscribing institutions for four hundred dollars (which is comparable to the rental fee of the average canned show) and transportation one way. In addition, each of the ten subscribers gets to keep a print from each portfolio. The four-hundred-dollar fee is below the combined market price of the two prints.

While I am discussing prints, I would like to insert some parenthetical thoughts about my personal preferences, which are reflected in the choice of our exhibits in the graphics area. When I began collecting, I noticed a pattern in the selections made in study and actual purchase. Invariably, the artists chosen were painter-printmakers, such as Rembrandt, Goya, Redon, and Morandi. With the exception of a handful of artists such as Piranesi, Callot, and Bresdin, I find the pure printmakers, such as Stanley Hayter, incredible bores who do little more than display their virtuosity. I have also found that, due to the skyrocketing popularity of print collecting, the market is horribly inflated. At present, the most wise investment a collector can make is in the area of drawings, and drawings will always provide the most intimate glimpse into the mind of the artist. Due to this intimacy, drawings, like chamber music, will only sustain a small but faithful audience.

The third scheme requires the cooperation of a serious and wealthy collector. The seed to this project was planted two years ago when I brought Jim McGarrell for a lecture to the small college where I was teaching. It was in conjunction with an exhibit of his prints and drawings. At that point I was running an art department on a budget of six hundred dollars a year. My fund-raising needs were apparent and my methods

were a sort of good-hearted neo-Machiavellian sleight of hand that I have never fully explained to anyone.

In a discussion with Jim I realized that the tremendous market for his work, both here and in Europe, was working to his disadvantage in some ways. The paintings disappeared into private collections, which meant they would not be available for exhibition. Also, Jim quite often works in a series, both in the print editions (such as the "Two Part Inventions") and the paintings (such as his last exhibit of double-double portraits). After the opening exhibit, the work was scattered. It was obvious that a large circulating exhibit would have a ready-made audience, and would give a more intensified and comprehensive view of the artist. At first, Jim and I discussed the possibility of putting together an exhibit of existing prints and drawings with a set of paintings done especially for the show. McGarrell eventually decided in favor of doing an entire exhibit based on one theme. It would consist of six large drawings, six color lithographs, and six paintings (4 by 6 feet each). In addition the artist would furnish catalogues, posters, and a lecture on the exhibit. Since the art club's budget would not allow for such a heavy investment I approached George Irwin, president of the Quincy Foundation, chairman of the Illinois Arts Council, and an avid collector. Mr. Irwin agreed to commission the entire exhibit and allow the Quincy Art Club to circulate it for three years; then the work would go into his private collection.

This exhibit is scheduled to open in Quincy this December. I should like to acknowledge that the project would never have materialized without the full support and assistance of McGarrell's dealer, Allan Frumkin. We are getting requests for the exhibit from coast to coast.

Another proposal which I am just beginning to work on will require the assistance of many collectors. It would work best

with a group of at least twenty. The plan is to purchase twenty to thirty large wash drawings by Philip Pearlstein. Each collector would put up five hundred dollars for a drawing. The current market price is six hundred to seven hundred dollars. The drawings would be circulated for two years by the Quincy Art Club at three hundred dollars a booking. We would pay for posters, framing, crating, and insurance. At the end of the exhibition tour each collector would get his drawing, and a share of the profit from the rental fee. This would amount to at least one hundred dollars each. Mr. Pearlstein's gallery has agreed to cooperate with this project.

These schemes are not abstractions. They are concrete proposals that have already been put to work. The most glorious aspects of each are that they do not involve dead artists or world-famous wealthy ones and the mechanics of each project are relatively simple.

Also, one should keep in mind that the audience for great art never ceases to accumulate. Great art quite often has originally met with neglect, contempt, or open hostility. How large was the audience for the *Disasters of War* when the plates were first proofed? Or for Van Gogh?

Today, our museums and art centers attempt to justify their existence or significance by attendance and other statistics. I suspect that this stems from the attitudes we have inherited from the Puritans and the Robber Barons.

The middle-class middle-of-the-road morality and Agnew mentality that one encounters so constantly and feverishly at work on museum boards is quite contrary to the nature and purpose of art.

The poor and the minority groups are bused to exhibits, concerts, and plays but must return to the reality of rat-infested apartments. Most programs in the arts are operated on the ridiculous notion that culture, like religion, will have a soothing

effect on people—where in fact true culture will prove to be of little moral value, or downright dangerous.

Picasso was right. Art is not for the purpose of interior decoration. Art is a weapon of war!

Art is the one activity of man that has no boundaries or restrictions, for his imagination (unlike his intellect or knowledge) has no limits.

The arts can best be served when the museums behave less like institutions and begin to follow a more creative curvature.

As a gallery director I am perfectly willing to leave the cultural missionary work to the Junior League and Smith graduates. Granted, this is probably a strange and foreign attitude, but I predict it will be a growing one.

Like so many others, I became an activist in the early sixties during the civil rights movement. And, like the students today, I was greeted with suspicion, fear, and dread. It was inevitable that some of us would wind up respectable, and it was just as inevitable that beneath the middle-class trappings would remain a “tiger in the reeds” looking to change things. I have friends in law, medicine, and science, and they are struggling for change within their fields as well.

There’s a stiff wind blowing, so you had best prepare for the change.

SAMUEL GRAFTON
ROBERT HALLOCK
SINCLAIR HITCHINGS
JOHN WILSON

Four Views of the American Audience

SAMUEL GRAFTON: For the American audience today, I am convinced that the concept of art is changing from that of a possession to that of an experience. For me, art is something man does to nature that makes something happen inside the minds and hearts of those who see the result. This idea of something happening to the viewer will, I feel sure, be a major theme for a long time to come. It is a quite simple extension of this thought to say that the most important object inside an art museum is the visitor. If you can make something significant happen to him with two Greek mustard pots and a late or tourist state of a Piranesi print, you are running a good museum. If, with all the money that is being spent on art in our time, both in the public and private sectors, nothing much is happening to the consciousnesses of the viewers, then we are guilty of empty overemphasis of art as we once were guilty of overemphasis of football.

Of course there are sensitive persons on whom art always acts powerfully. I am not an artist. I did begin to draw when I was very young. My elementary school teachers tried to ship me off to an art school. I resisted manfully, and had my own way, as you can plainly see. But I have lived happily among images and symbols all my life. To me they have always had a gardenlike interest. To see pictures come off a press seems to me

something like watching nature herself in the floodtide of creation. I went to art galleries before this was considered reasonable behavior on the part of an American and I took up the time of print curators while I was still in short pants. They were all splendidly helpful as they still are; I never met a mean one.

My major interest was words, or, rather, thoughts that cannot be drawn and, of course, there are some.

But always there was this other interest and this came to life in me when I met Robert Hallock, who is art director and managing editor of the magazine *Lithopinion*, on which I labor. When the two of us set out to found this magazine, actually to invent it, we discovered that there was no conflict of any kind between my work as editor and his work as art director. We found that it was never a question of which came first, the words or the pictures; they seemed to come alive together, if we were lucky and good and lived right. Mr. Hallock's deep interest in literature and current affairs almost exactly correspond to my own interest in his area and so we have found that when we like something very much, and wonder together what it means and try to show it and talk about it and explain it, it seems to work—whether the subject be ancient rebuses or old playing cards or a chapter in the incredible life story of Pablo Picasso. And we have found that when we make these offerings to our readers, they respond, they seem to undergo an experience as we did and they also, bless them, seem extraordinarily grateful that we went to the trouble of showing them something fine out of the archives of man.

I think art may be at something like the stage of music when the phonograph just began to be widely popular. Listening to music in our time has become quite definitely an experience, a private ritual, an almost incommunicable personal event. Given the help of museum directors, curators, art publishers, and, finally, artists, who consider humbly enough and often enough

what they can do for the art viewer, the art experience in our time may come to have comparable depth and personal significance.

When I see the great museums of today on typical Saturday or Sunday afternoons, with people crowding the streets for half a mile around, as in the neighborhood of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, and descending with their ice cream and their babies on the arena of art as if they were going to an arena of sport, I feel we are on the way. I think, of course, that museums should make a virtue of all the attendant problems. I don't know whether art museums and libraries should actually run the ice-cream stands in the street outside—I don't see why not—but I'm certain they should have outdoor booths and pushcarts selling prints, they should have earnest and gifted young people on soapboxes or under trees explaining and expounding the mysteries of form and symbol; they should surely carry what they have into the side streets. Certainly there is no reason for depending on basketball alone to solve our urban cultural problems.

As we move away from the possessional concept of art, to a more instrumental doctrine, we are going to move away also from the one-big-building concept to area, neighborhood, and city and statewide concepts. A museum must become an institution that changes lives. That is a lot more refreshing than having as one's goal the amassing of more treasure than one's neighbor has—an activity which has always disturbed moralists to some extent.

ROBERT HALLOCK: I've always been interested in pictures. When I was a kid, I literally had the walls covered with pictures. It was a constantly changing private "gallery." I think that this intrigue with pictures is a never-ending one that is never a locked-up concept or diversion in my mind. It has

constantly refreshing aspects, those of visual analysis, that I find exciting. I try to get some of that excitement into the magazine, working very closely with Mr. Grafton. We don't isolate text and picture. We try to have the meaning of both these things go together. Half of our 22,000 circulation, incidentally, is all over the world. The magazine goes to people primarily interested in the graphic arts and people in government, in libraries, advertising agencies, and so forth. About half of the circulation goes to the working membership of Local One, craftsmen who are lithographers. Their response has been fantastic because they are craftsmen and they are very proud of this lithography union. The meaning of pictures and text they find in *Lithopinion* has enlarged their concept in many areas, especially their relationship to their children and their neighbors. That's an aspect which I think is especially rewarding, because there was some apprehension that we were going over the heads of the audience. I think that's been proven to be false. People are interested in more things these days, more variety of expression visually, certainly. They're exposed to more pictures and they want better things. They're buying more art.

Lithopinion, incidentally, grew out of a *New York Times* Sunday supplement I designed and edited for the Lithographers in 1962, and titled "Art is not an end in itself, but a means of addressing humanity." It was such a success that we still get requests for reprints.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: What you say touches on something which seems to be at the heart of the American audience, which may make it different from the audience of any previous age, and that's the American phenomenon of universities everywhere. I've been fascinated by the fact that there are a tiny group of print sellers—John Wilson is one, Ferdinand Roten's organization is another, and London Grafica Arts is a third—

who are engaged in mass distribution of prints across the United States. In order to pull off this mass distribution, they head unerringly for the colleges. Since John Wilson began his print-selling career in college, I'd like to ask him to tell us, first, how he got into the business of being a printseller in 1960, and second, to give us some idea of the geographical area of the United States he has covered.

JOHN WILSON: I came into the business through the back door. In fact I didn't know what a print was. I was an art major and I loved pottery. Pottery was the whole thing in the world for me at that time, and I didn't bother to get acquainted with anything else. My roommate was a printmaker, and he would trade prints with me for pieces of pottery I had made. I didn't see anything in a print; it was just a piece of paper. I would leave them in my locker or anywhere else.

I was not really concerned about a job until I graduated from Michigan State. I was in the employment bureau at the school, and I heard somebody say, "Art major or art background." I turned around and it was a young guy. I thought he was back looking for a job. He said, "Our gallery needs somebody with this background." I told him I was an art major, and I needed a job. This was how I was hired by Ferdinand Roten. I worked with the firm for eight years. I became vice president in charge of sales, and later I left and started my own business.

Too few people know what prints are. I came out of school an art major and I didn't know what they were. This was a loss at the first show where I sold prints. I was at the Cleveland Art Institute, and a student asked me how I could sell a Picasso for \$17.50, and I didn't know. But I was very fortunate in the fact that I had the best people in the world as my teachers. Mrs. Prasse was standing close to me and I said, "Ask her." The student did, and he took the Picasso; it was *The Grand Illu-*

sion or *The Old King*. It has a separate Picasso signature at the bottom in red. It looks like a pencil signature but it's not. It's printed from a stone. Mrs. Prasse went into ecstasy over this print and told this young man all about it. This was how I got my knowledge. Mr. Joachim showed me beautiful Villons at the Chicago Art Institute. Dr. Troche of the Palace of the Legion of Honor asked me why one print by Redon was priced at \$125. This was back in 1960 when prints didn't sell for \$125, and I said, "I don't know." He said, "What a terrible salesman!" He said, "Come here!" and he took me back into the vault and pulled out the Mellerio catalogue and looked up the print, and said, "There are twenty-five of these in existence. That's why it's \$125."

There's a large audience coming in for prints. Different people are starting to collect. They don't have the funds to buy a Picasso watercolor or oil, but they can buy an original print. They are buying these because people have told them that they are original. For the most part they don't really know why, but once they buy an original there is a quality in a print that a person becomes involved with. Once they become involved with the qualities of a print they cannot help themselves. It's a disease that they're stricken with. Every time I come through, they have to come down and see what prints I have.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: After the *Fifty Books of the Year* show opened in Boston about a week ago, we were talking about book distribution in the United States, and we decided that the great places were the East Coast, Chicago, and the West Coast—nothing in between. But you've been to a lot of places in between. What about some idea of where you go, across the country?

JOHN WILSON: There is only one section of the country that

I'm not acquainted with, those states from New Jersey south on the Atlantic Ocean, plus Pennsylvania. These are the only sections of the country that I haven't sold prints in. All areas are becoming very involved. There are sections of the country that are very hard to get acquainted with, and there were very few collectors in some of these areas. In many cases I didn't even take time to go there because I had too many other places to go. But there are people moving constantly in our country, and with them they're taking their knowledge and their desires also.

For example, an experience I had at L.S.U. A young collector student from Indiana got his master's degree and moved to Louisiana. He wrote and asked if I covered that section of the country and if I would like to stop. I had never stopped there before. I did and I was very happy to have some place to go where I knew a collector. When I got there, he had a huge number of people waiting to see these prints. Many of them knew absolutely nothing about what prints are. One girl took a Dali, *Don Quixote*. She loved the picture, and she wanted to know if she could run off a xerox copy. I said, "Well, fine." If somebody likes something, I'm more than happy to have them have it, so I said, "Yes. If that would satisfy you, do!" and George Burks, the instructor, and James Reeves, the curator there, started telling her that the whole reason for the print was not the image alone but the quality of the print, and the poor girl, finally, as she sat there, she bought it.

The audience is going all over the country. In Arizona people are going there to retire, and taking their desires with them. Arizona is becoming a very dominant area.

There are extreme collectors also. This is another place where I got a lot of my knowledge. With a lawyer out there, and his wife, I would schedule a whole day. They loved prints. I would go in the morning, and we would start looking at prints. If I

didn't know anything about a print, and Barbara and Orme didn't know anything about it, he had a library that he could look it up in. When I left, I knew what prints I had. There are intense collectors all over the country.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: Across the country, throughout the country, there is a hunger for images. Almost all our magazines, and *Lithopinion* more than most, are sensitive to this hunger for images. College education, the impact of a college background, is a more limited phenomenon, though pretty soon almost everyone is going to have a junior college or college background. The characteristics and size of the audience are bound to change as this happens.

ROBERT HALLOCK: I think of the wide popularity, for instance, of posters, of street art. Young people collect these and hang them on the wall, not for their propaganda message but because they're strong graphic things and they're exciting. They are prints of the cheapest order, but there is an increasing sophistication about this graphic format.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: How much of your business do you do in colleges, John?

JOHN WILSON: It's primarily colleges. These are our main source of customers. One of the reasons we go to the universities is that they now have museums. And the museums do have budgets for collecting. Their budgets are not huge, so they can't afford a Picasso painting, but they can afford a Picasso print. So first of all I'm there to show the museum my wares so that they can add to their collection. They, for the most part, want their students to view the prints, so we started opening these up to let them look. You can buy very beautiful

prints for very inexpensive prices. Daumiers you can still buy for ten dollars apiece. Students have become some of my major customers just from the fact that they can buy the inexpensive prints. There are an awful lot of prints still on the market that are inexpensive. There are a lot of printmakers who still believe in the print as a multi-image.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: How do you find professional people, who collect, in the communities you visit? Do you meet them at the colleges?

JOHN WILSON: Yes. I also meet them through the art associations. At different art associations they have a day when they invite the members. There are collectors all across the country who have been collecting for a long period of time. I was at Madison, Wisconsin, three days ago, and they have a small art center which was just given the complete collection of one of the professors, one of the math professors at the University of Wisconsin. He had an enormous collection, boxes and boxes and stacks of prints of all types. I was impressed with the prints by Kollwitz he had amassed. These were only twenty dollars at the time he bought them. He never paid more than this for a print. And you can and you do. A lot of people do get involved.

SAMUEL GRAFTON: I think something very interesting happens to the public when an art moves into the public area. A kind of popular expertise develops. We haven't reached anything like that yet in prints, but in the field of, say, postage stamp collecting there is many a collector who makes himself an expert on all the varieties and variations and imperfections and loves to talk about them. It's a variation of baseball talk. This has happened in music, now, strangely enough. There are a number of magazines that review records, and their readers are

record collectors, and these people know that on a certain recording, after the two-hundred-and-fifty-eighth bar, the conductor has omitted a five-measure repeat, and they talk about it. It is their baseball talk. "That soprano didn't hit C in that particular breath. She only got as high as B flat." And they know this.

Well, you don't have this in art yet, but I could visualize a publication about prints from the buyer's point of view (this publication still doesn't exist).^{*} Dealers might not like it in the beginning, as they didn't like the record magazines in the beginning, because it might say, "Well, this issue of forty is not very good. The first one was good, but the dealer kept it for himself, and the next thirty-nine are pale." In the end, nothing could create public interest more than this kind of publication, as people began to talk prints knowledgeably. I think that public expertise is one of the things to shoot for.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: You begin to discover that there are many different audiences in the United States. Different people will come to different exhibitions. Some of them come from areas of the community that you have not seen or explored before. There are a good many Americans of about graduate-student age who want to own vivid, contemporary things. There are young doctors and lawyers who feel the same way, and sometimes will pay quite a lot for what they want. The market for serigraphs by so-called name artists, contemporary prints which sell for as much as five hundred dollars, is becoming big enough to support even a gallery or two in Boston. People want the contemporary images, but on the other hand, they know at least something about what the print is.

^{*}EDITOR'S NOTE: Since this discussion, just such a publication, *The Print Collector's Newsletter*, has been founded and is being published six times a year.

SAMUEL GRAFTON: They do know. We are at the very beginning, I think. Wouldn't you agree?

JOHN WILSON: Very much so. This activity does go on. What you were saying about the magazine for print-buyers is true. One of the experiences that I have is the evening group. Different professors across the country, before I have a show at a university, will get together in the evening with colleagues who are print collectors. They will go through the prints and have a beautiful time looking at all of them and discussing them with each other.

SAMUEL GRAFTON: The other thing that I think is necessary in our crowded age is the invention of an expansion wall or some kind of portfolio that can hold fifty prints without messing up the average small livingroom. I think the print industry (it is an industry by now) ought to consider very seriously some inventions in furniture design.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: I would like to turn the discussion now to a question posed by two members of the audience today: when does a print stop being a print in this spectrum of the artist's involvement and the craftsman's participation? The artist and the craftsman are more than allies and closer than cousins, which may be all the more reason why so many people today are confused about the artist's personal mark, the mark not just of his style but of his handiwork, his control. Why don't we start with the spectrum of meaning extending from a completely personal work by the artist, to an enterprise that he carries out under his own supervision, but with the help of a workshop, to the skillful

reproduction which he may see, in proofs, and approve, and perhaps sign, to the posters that are being produced by the many thousands, sold in bookstores, and put on dormitory walls? Where does originality begin and end? Today there is an outpouring of very slick, very competent pictures from Paris with fine lithographic color printing, or sometimes with a collotype base and color stencilled on over it; often these are sold as originals. Or is this argument about originality really meaningless? I don't know. What's your thought about it?

SAMUEL GRAFTON: A big problem is knowing if the market value of a print derives only from the fact that it is part of a limited edition.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: You're taking images and reproducing them beautifully in *Lithopinion*. They reach an audience, and they convey meaning.

SAMUEL GRAFTON: I think we're going to have to revise some of our concepts. The manufacturer of an edition limited to forty made a decision. This effort to make something rare was part of the limited-edition book market which has pretty much collapsed. It was very popular in the twenties. You bought your two volumes of Aristotle illustrated by hand-made drawings, and you paid twenty-two dollars, and you had a rarity. Of course you had a rarity, a rarity by someone's decision. Well, I don't think rarities can be made by act of will. I think they're rare because of historical forces. An artist's work that is no longer appreciated is thrown away. It becomes rare. That's rarity.

We do something that Bob's very involved in at the Amalgamated Lithographers; we have a three-story school loaded with high-class modern lithographic equipment, millions of dollars'

worth of it. There are electronic scanners that make color transparencies. You hold the picture in front, you take it out of the back. There are four-color presses. Bob has been inviting artists to come in and use these instruments like lithographic stones. A lithographic stone is a tool, but that doesn't mean that a rotary press isn't an artist's tool if he can do a good job on it. They are fascinated. They've been having discussions of how big the editions ought to be, and one artist, whom I remember very, very well, said, "I don't know, maybe it ought to be big enough to give one copy to everybody in Reading, Pennsylvania." And if it was good enough, you could give one to everybody in Reading, Pennsylvania. If it was cherished, if people wanted it, if they didn't send it away or throw it away or sell it, it could still become a rare print in time, and that would make it a legitimate rarity.

I think we're going to have to rethink this whole idea of how big editions ought to be. It might come to situations in which you have a famous print of which thousands of copies were printed. Well, why not? What's wrong with that? It doesn't cheapen it in any way. We might have to develop better methods of working. We might have to develop methods whereby an artist could put his personal stamp on each one of two thousand. That's a technical problem. Maybe it can be licked. I think this artificial assumption by a parliament of print people that forty or fifty is the ideal number is salesmanship, but it's not aesthetics.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: Where do you draw the line?

JOHN WILSON: During the break one person pointed out to me that I said people are buying Picasso prints because they can't afford a Picasso painting. Now I want to emphasize again—I thought I did—that this is not the reason for the collector.

But this is a reason why some start collecting. Once they buy a print, and become involved with the qualities of that print, then they have the disease. And then they become print collectors. It's not because they can't afford the painting that they continue to collect prints. They collect prints because it is something more unique for them.

About editions, I believe in prints as multi-image, but I believe that the artist is making prints first because he can achieve his image in these prints. I believe that as long as the artist can pull an impression from the plate or block that is his image, and still has the quality that he wants, then it should be printed.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: There are people represented in the "Masterworks of Lithography" exhibition, like Redon or Toulouse-Lautrec, who were on the scene to say, "This stone is beginning to give a little, it's wearing, the surface is breaking up a bit, and it's time to stop printing." On the other hand, William Ivins wrote that one of the beauties of the work of Daumier was that there was so much of it that there was never any reason why anyone couldn't own a print by Daumier.

You haven't really tackled the question of originality, however. In your business, you don't deal in reproductions, you deal in original prints.

JOHN WILSON: Originality is one of the abstract terms that you just cannot define. Everyone here, I imagine, would have a different opinion of what originality is, in a print. For me it's what I personally can accept. I want everybody else to form his own opinion. Cézanne's *Bathers*, for instance. This goes to the point of what I think is originality. Cézanne did the watercolor, but he did the watercolor with an original print in mind. Then the lithographer made color separations and transferred

them to the stones. Now this, to me, is still an original print, because Cézanne had conceived it with the thought that it was to be an original print. But, now, there are many artists making lithographs that have no knowledge of the medium, and they're just reproducing their drawings. This is the touchy part. Is this original?

ROBERT HALLOCK: This is, I think, a dishonest aspect of a lot of prints that are being done in certain places. An artist will turn over a drawing to a lithographer who will literally redraw it on the stone. The whole thing is counterfeit, it seems to me. However, these are sold as signed, original lithographs.

JOHN WILSON: Also, look at the extent to which the industry—should we refer to it that way?—is going. The Chagall Jerusalem Windows, done by Sorier, signed by Chagall, are on the market as signed, limited-edition lithographs. Except where you have an extremely reputable dealer, no one says that these are lithographs by Sorier of Chagall's windows. Many reputable dealers won't handle these prints, and those who do, list them: "After Chagall." But there are too many people in the field now who don't know the difference, who are selling these as originals.

SAMUEL GRAFTON: I think we'll be well on the way, when you'll walk down the street some day and hear the two people in front of you arguing about: is a print original or is it not? This is what I would call the baseball talk of art.

I don't think this can be settled by a group of art people. I think it's going to be settled in the realm of public opinion, one way or another, and the settlement will probably surprise us all. To go back to my music analogy, the same thing exactly is coming up in music. They are making recordings of operas,

and the soprano hits a beautiful high C someplace, and in the next aria she misses it. They cut the mistake out of the tape and put in the high C. It's great. Is this a recording of the opera? For two or three years there was some concern about this. The public decision seems to be, it sounds great, we love it, let's not worry.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: I think that in art there is always going to be connoisseurship. One of the most difficult concepts that I have to convey in my work here is the way a print has bite to it. It is the pressing of a surface against paper, the stamping of a surface into paper. The process involves three dimensions, really. When you put a good photographic reproduction, printed by collotype or photo-offset lithography, side by side with an original print, the photographic reproduction has a certain flatness that the print doesn't have. I used to own and get a lot of pleasure out of framed reproductions—good reproductions of Dürer's prints, for instance. I don't now, as much, because I like this bite, however subtle it may be, of a surface into paper. I reject William Ivins' idea (but he enjoyed being controversial) that an exhibition of lithographs is really just an exhibition of drawings. He felt that lithography as a medium had little importance or character or identity of its own, except as a means to an end, reproducing drawings. Personally, I find that the prints which are on the walls of the gallery today have special qualities. They aren't drawings, they're lithographs, and certain things are happening in them which can be enjoyed for their own sake.

I think there's a great deal in what you say, but I think that comparisons between art and music have always had a few hazards in them. I think that people are going to go on loving certain things, living with them, enjoying them, knowing more about them. Art which deals with objects may be pos-

sessed by people in a different way from the possession of music.

In the print field, since you're dealing with multiples, every print collector automatically becomes a great comparer. He compares what he has with what other people have, he tries to see more impressions of a print that interests him. In a field like Daumier's prints, if you're really going to collect, you ought to know what happens to a lithographic stone after you've printed ten impressions, a hundred impressions, a thousand impressions, two thousand impressions. I'd gladly own one after two thousand impressions, but I'd rather own one that was printed earlier in the game. I don't think that we'll reach any conclusion about this, but I think the day may come when the street argument you're talking about could take place.

I would like to shift our discussion to the revolution which is taking place all through our society. Things once held by a small group are now going to be held by everybody. In order to cope with this revolution, we're going to have to cope with the nineteenth-century edifices which reflect the old concepts of how to deal with our common stock of art, of books, of other resources. Actually, we may decide to keep the buildings but to fix our attention on the contemporary audience in a way which will bind us less to the structures and more to people. Our print department here at the Library is a small operation, with a full-time staff of four, but it is still large enough to be able to have a program that will offer different things to different audiences. Early this year we held a show of architectural drawings and photographs celebrating the opening of Boston's new City Hall, and we had a reception for a large group of architectural historians. Later we held a reception for a less specialized group of people to whom we knew this exhibition would be of interest. We have smaller gatherings, like today's symposium, at which almost everyone is a collector, a

teacher, or an artist. We have begun evening gatherings in which a small number of people can hold matted prints and look at them at first hand, in a leisurely way. And I'm now starting a custom-made effort which is called "A Walk along Newbury Street" by appointment only. This is for the starting collector—the person who is busy at a profession, the doctor or lawyer, the young teacher—who has started to own art, who has a crowded schedule, but who jumps at the chance to plan a couple of hours to explore galleries. A world of galleries is growing up, and I think people will move in and out of it much more freely. It's one of the liveliest things a city has to offer. Except for the frigid Bond Street type of gallery, which doesn't exist in Boston, the gallery world seems more accessible in many ways than the world of departmental offices in libraries or museums. The galleries are inside walls, too, but they're not as walled in as some of our older institutions. In the museum world, the inner sanctum is a common phenomenon. How you get it unwalled, I don't know.

SAMUEL GRAFTON: You need an IBM print retrieval system.

JOHN WILSON: How do you get people involved, especially with museums? About the only way is to take the art to them.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: You do, you take these prints to people, but curators are not in that business, by and large, except in putting prints in glassed-in cases.

JOHN WILSON: One occasion I recall was at the Dayton Art Institute. I would be there at the museum, showing prints, and for three or four years, the students who are across the courtyard wouldn't walk across to see the prints. So Mark Clark arranged it so that I showed prints over at the museum school.

Students swarmed into the place, and bought enormous amounts of prints, but they wouldn't, for four years, walk across that courtyard. You know, there's something about a museum. It's turned off. There are people that we've got to get it back to.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: There's got to be more mobility. We've had a series of photographic prints, made from fine negatives by Samuel Chamberlain, of European and American subjects, and we're circulating these as small, self-contained exhibitions to libraries in Massachusetts. For us, this seems to point the way. The Smithsonian has sent many exhibitions around the country, but not all the works of art have fared equally well in transit. By and large, prints, I think, travel better than watercolors and drawings.

There's got to be a getting out in some way. For years I've felt that the Boston Museum of Fine Arts could house its great oriental collections in a freestanding building that would have the same relationship to the central museum that the Cloisters have to the Metropolitan. It's obvious that you can't take one of the greatest oriental collections in the world and house it properly in a wing of a crowded museum with endless corridors. But the whole business of decentralization really has hardly gotten going yet.

Here at the Library, we're getting involved in regional book distribution through regional library systems. Trucks go back and forth, carrying books from central libraries to libraries that don't have those particular items which have been requested. You can take those transportation patterns when they're established and use them for transporting exhibitions.

There's another medium, though, which is publishing. With literacy goes taste. Words and images go naturally together. I think that *Lithopinion* is pioneering in this field.

SAMUEL GRAFTON: Thank you. I think that publishing is one of the keys. I think it's amazing that publishing, art publishing, has grown to be such a vast industry, and so little of it has been done by the museums themselves.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: There's no museum publication comparable to *Lithopinion*. And for *Lithopinion* you're commissioning original works of art.

If we could wind up the morning with a little story-telling, I would like to ask you, John, to tell a couple of stories about meetings with collectors. You were talking about a small group of collectors who were also gourmets. You were talking last night about a visit to Chico State College in California, which brings us back to the influence of universities in revolutionizing the American audience for art. If you would spin these two tales, we'll make them the conclusion of our morning of talk.

JOHN WILSON: This is what is nice about my job. I do get to travel all over the country. I get to meet beautiful people, and we all have one great bond: we all love prints. Now, the group that you mentioned is a small group called the Gourmet Club, in Oklahoma City. It's four young couples who enjoy life. They will meet at home, once a month, and one couple will prepare a gourmet dinner. The once a year that I come through, they go to great extremes, and go to one of the lavish places in Oklahoma City, and the chef prepares a special meal for us, and we go through all the different courses with different wines. Then we all sit and look through prints, and enjoy them.

Another example is the professors who are all across the country. One group of collectors is the English professors. A prime example is Stanley Pelter, who is now head of the Humanities Department at Chico State College. He loves prints of all types. He loves English art especially, and he has a special

interest in Joseph Crawhall. He had been away a year, doing research, and is publishing a book on this artist.

He was at Kent State, and he would have a group from the English Department, and anybody else, really, who loved prints, over to his house, in the evening. When he went to Chico State, another professor kept the group together at Kent. Stan started a group at Chico State, and another member of the group from Kent moved to Michigan State. They now have an evening group there. There is all this movement of the profession within the universities, moving, and enjoying prints still, and wanting to have the same continued experience.

SINCLAIR HITCHINGS: Thank you all for these ideas about the American audience for art. What you say adds up to a picture of a mass audience, at least at the undergraduate and graduate-student level. Within the audience of people of all ages, we may well have the largest market yet to exist for art, including the work of contemporary artists.

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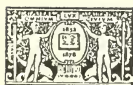
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